

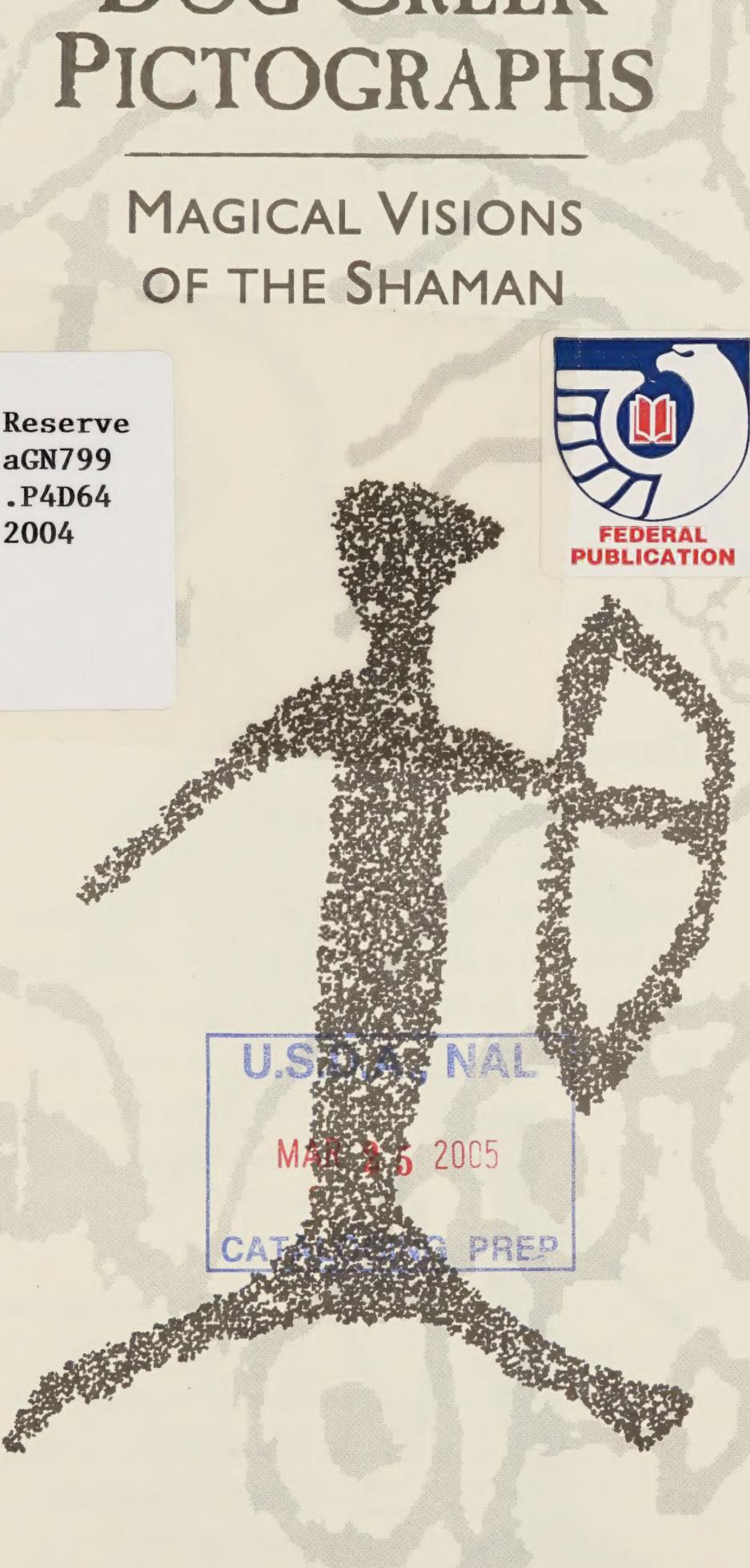
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DOG CREEK PICTOGRAPHS

MAGICAL VISIONS OF THE SHAMAN

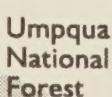
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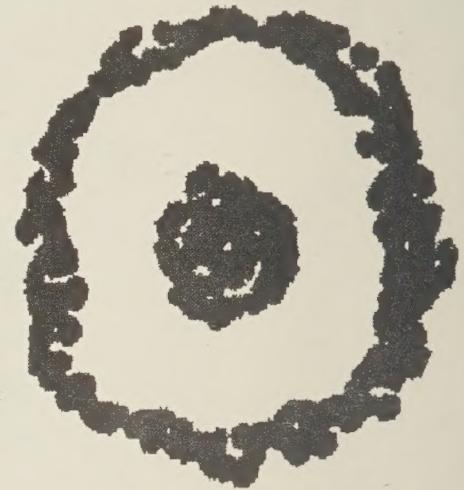
Forest Service
Pacific Northwest
Region



Circle and Dot Patterns

All people, regardless of culture, have hallucinations that include a limited range of geometric patterns. Sets of circles and dots are among the most common to occur during trance experiences. The meaning varies among cultures but was recognized by the shaman as a sign of supernatural power.

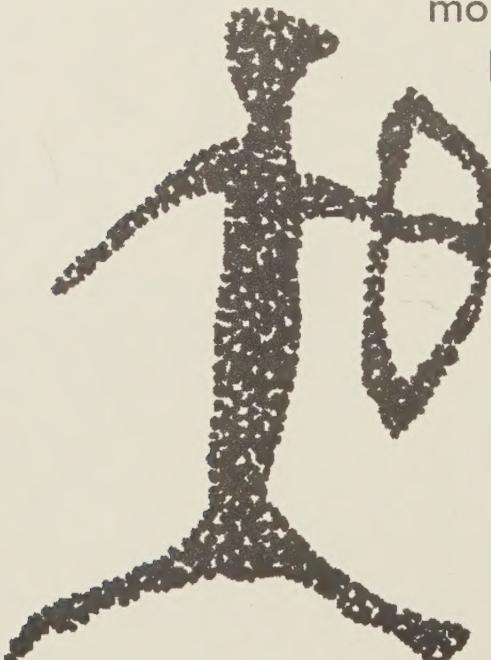
Commonly, these designs were painted on the shaman's possessions, such as clothing and shields.



Human Figure with Bow

The bow and arrow was first used in the Umpqua region about 2,000 years ago, replacing the spear and throwing board. Since the tool in this scene is a bow, the painting must be less than 2,000 years old. Judging from the good condition of the painting, it is likely no

more than 500 years old.



Bows and arrows were used by hunters and by shamans in religious ceremonies. Since this scene shows no game, it is assumed the painting depicts a shaman's ceremony.

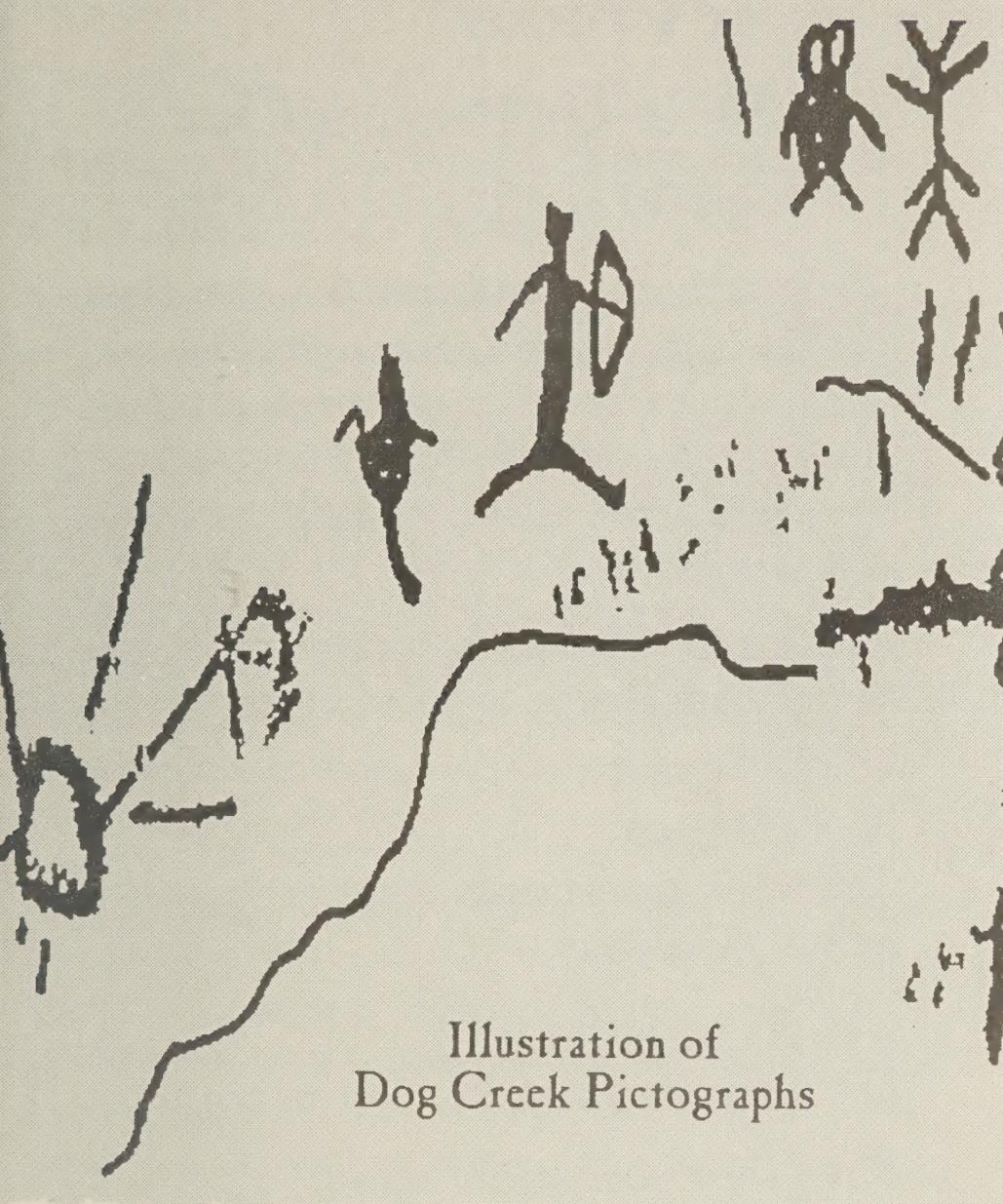
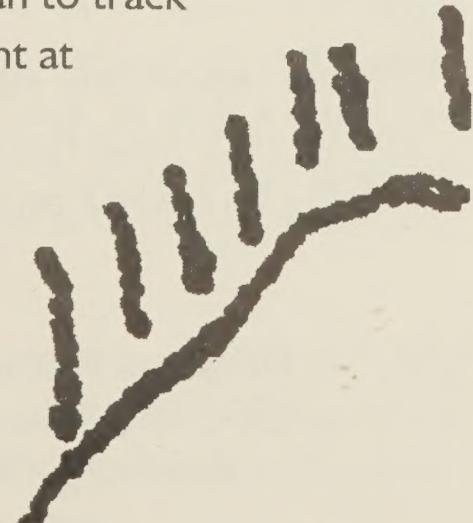
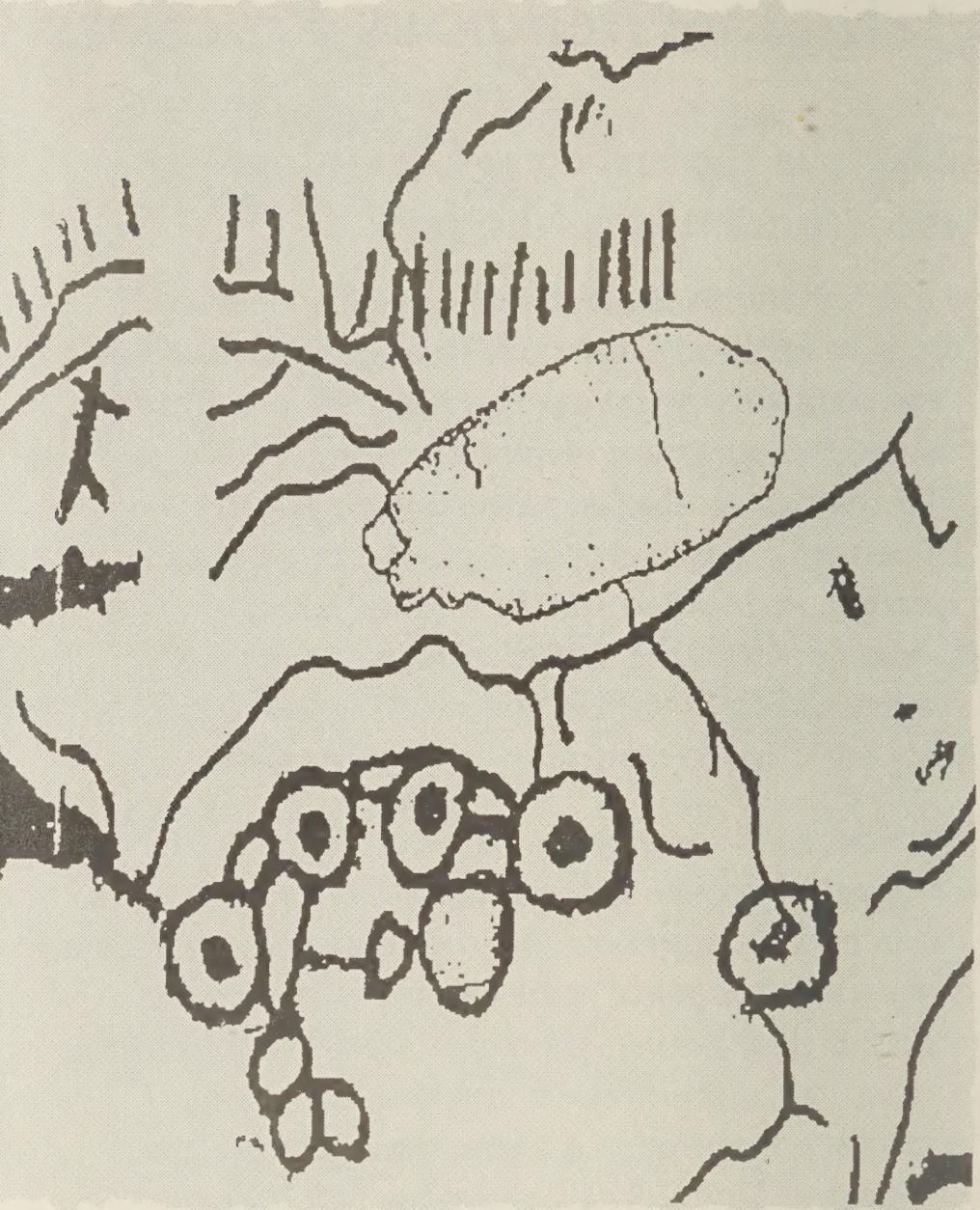


Illustration of
Dog Creek Pictographs

Tally Marks

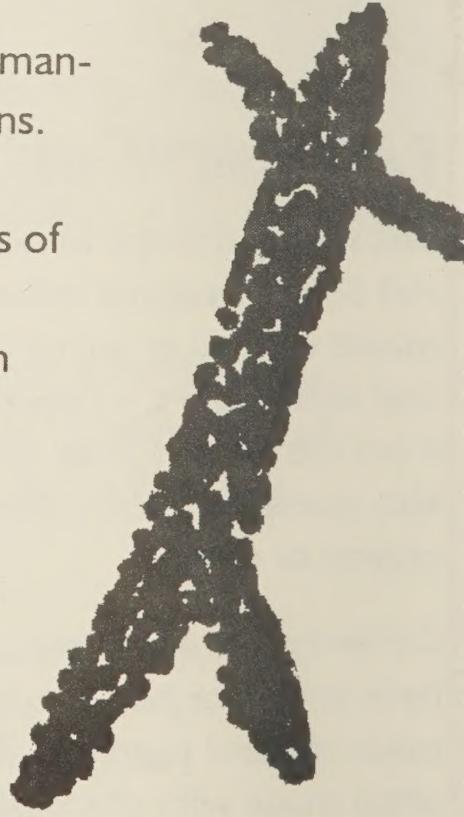
Many sites have these short, parallel lines depicting the geometric patterns shamans saw during their visions. An American Indian from the Columbia Plateau stated that tally marks were used by the shaman to track the number of days spent at the site waiting for a vision to appear; another said the marks showed the number of spirit helpers the shaman had.





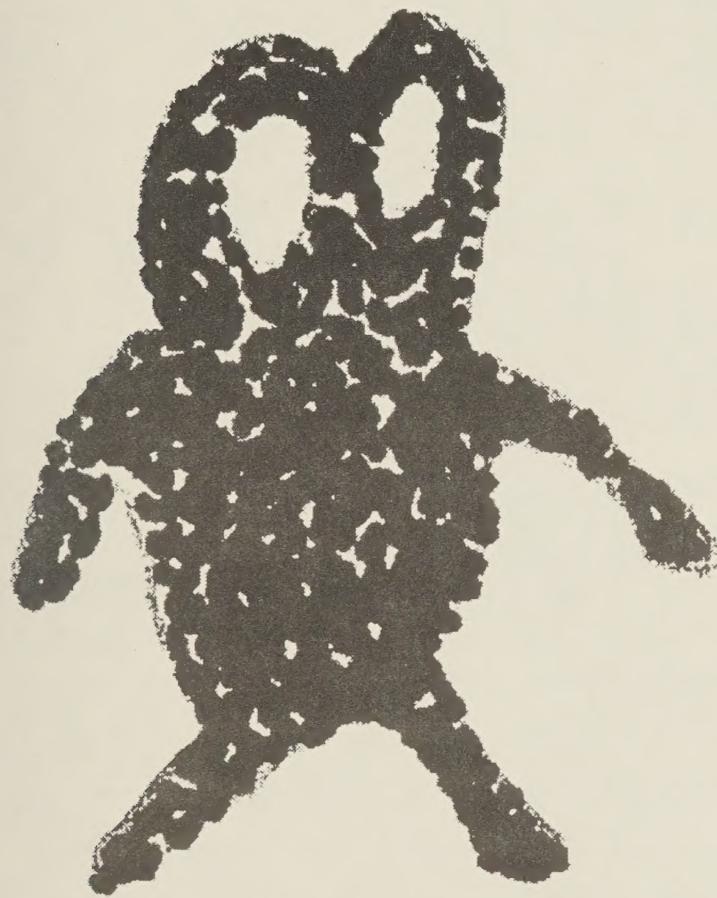
Human Figure

Shamans commonly saw human-like spirits during their visions. These may have been interpreted as ghosts (spirits of the dead), human-like supernatural beings, or even animal spirits that had “shape-shifted” into human form. These stick-figure humans are among the most common motifs made by shamans to portray their visions.



Bug-Eyed Human

Another human is shown in "bug-eye" form. This figure may portray a human-like spirit the shaman saw or the image of themselves. Shamans believed that enhanced sight, the ability to see into the future and to see events at distant places was one of their powers. To emphasize the size of their eyes is an expression of this enhanced power.

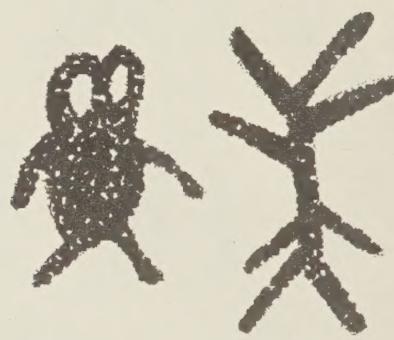


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Dog Creek Cave is a Record

Rock Art is a Window into the Early Indians of the Umpqua

Many ancient peoples made rock art paintings and engravings on cave and cliff walls. Dog Creek Cave contains paintings made by the aboriginal inhabitants of the Umpqua National Forest. These paintings, created during religious ceremonies, record the American Indian view of the supernatural world. They give us a window into their world, and other aspects of the American Indian past.



Dog Creek Cave Painters Lived by Hunting and Gathering

The Umpqua National Forest is a land of tall trees, rushing rivers, and high mountains. The original inhabitants of the Umpqua Region were the Cow Creek, Umpqua, Yoncalla Kalapuya and Southern Mollalla tribes, people who obtained their food by fishing, gathering, and hunting.

Although abundant salmon and trout were particularly important resources, these people moved regularly, traveling from place to place to hunt and harvest seasonally available resources. Important among these were deer and elk, which provided food; hides for clothing and bags; bones for tools; sinew for laces; and other useful products. Hunting required moving from river villages to upland campsites. Dog Creek Cave was one of these locations used while hunting game.

of Ancient Religious Practices

Magic in the Cave was Created by the Visions of the Shaman

American Indian life involved more than just a concern for food. Important to all groups, was their relationship to the supernatural world: a world accessed by shamans or medicine men or women. The shaman conducted rituals, cured illness, influenced the movement of game, controlled the weather, and sometimes, bewitched enemies. The shaman entered the supernatural by going into a trance, usually by fasting and smoking wild tobacco, allowing them to manipulate the spirits within.

Rock art sites were places of supernatural power. Rock paintings, like those at Dog Creek Cave, were made by shamans recording their supernatural visions. They show images of spirit helpers who gave the shamans their power, geometric patterns seen during a vision, and other events, including the shaman portraying himself as a supernatural being. The paintings at Dog Creek Cave show that it was considered a magical place where the spirits could be contacted.

Paint from Various Pigments

The rock paintings, or pictographs, were made with red ochre, a natural mineral earth pigment. This was mixed with oil or animal fat and applied to the cave wall with fingers, a frayed stick, or with a brush made from the tail of a small animal. Some paintings were also made from a dry chunk of ochre, used like a crayon or chalk.

Other figures at this site, and other sites in the region, have yellow or blue-green pictographs, made from other mineral pigments. Black paintings were most often made with charcoal.



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Help Us Protect Our Cultural Heritage Sites

The campsite at Dog Creek Cave has been destroyed by artifact looters, who illegally dug out the artifacts, preventing a detailed study of the site. The rock paintings still remain, but they are very fragile and are protected by law.

Please help us preserve this, and other archaeological sites, by following these guidelines.

Show Respect

This site is important to the American Indians of this area.

Please Don't Touch

Oils from your hands can destroy the art.

Keep Dust and Smoke Away

Dust and smoke build up on the rock and obscure the drawings.

Keep the Site Intact

Disturbing, defacing, or looting an archaeological site is against the law. These activities destroy our cultural heritage.

Please report any illegal activities you see to your local Ranger Station or call (541) 957-3462 or (541) 672-6601.

Umpqua National Forest
2900 NW Stewart Parkway
Roseburg, OR 97470

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